

City of Socorro

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Stingray Swim Team: A Celebration of Cooperation

Being a Stingray is about getting to the Sedillo Park pool by 6:30 every morning five days a week, and returning in the evening for a total of two-and-a-half hours of practice every day of the summer vacation. It's about knowing that, even though by League rules summer swim practice can start May 1, the pool doesn't open until after school is out, so already you may be a month behind in getting in tip top shape. It's about spending your Saturdays at swim meets, both here at home and in Albuquerque. And it's about competing.

It's a public team—anyone between the ages of 6 and 18 is welcome as long as you can “swim” the width of the pool, even if it's dog paddling. It's affordable. The cost is \$60 which includes a competition swimsuit, a team tshirt, a swim cap. But the benefits are so much greater. Kids get to feel they are part of a family. They have the opportunity to meet kids they might not otherwise know. They get the feeling of being a part of something bigger than themselves. They learn responsibility, teamwork and gain a sense of pride. And they're competitive!

Coach Jordan Vinson is delighted that this year the kids “did the best we ever have. We even had a grand champion in the 9-10 age group!”

As head coach, Vinson organizes the swimmers and the age-level coaches who are all employed by the City as Lifeguards and who attend the Saturday meets as volunteers. “They put in a lot of effort,” says Vinson. “The coaches for the 8-and-under kids have a huge task—the kids first starting out can be pretty rough.” But the



Devan Webb swims in a meet. The photo is courtesy Webb Photography.

coaches all know what it's like to be on the team, because they all have been. “Swim team members make the best life guards so we encourage them.”

And then there are the parents, whose participation is huge. It takes twenty volunteers to run a swim meet, and this year Socorro hosted two meets. Stephanie Bunning was the parent in charge of finding and organizing the volunteers. Eddie Botko took on the task of acquiring and distributing suits and tshirts to all 103 program participants.

The City provides the pool. The parents provide volunteer help as well as moral support. And the kids and coaches provide the enthusiasm.

What a cause for celebration!

Employee Anniversaries

Denise Herrera	10 years
Rick Trujillo	10 years

City Council

Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez	Nick Fleming
Gordy Hicks	Toby Jaramillo
Donald Monette	Michael Olguin, Jr.
Ernest Pargas, Jr.	Peter D. Romero
Ravi Bhasker, Mayor	Pat Salome, Clerk